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STUDY PROJECT

RESTRUCTURING SUPERPOWERS: THE ROLE OF THE MILITARY

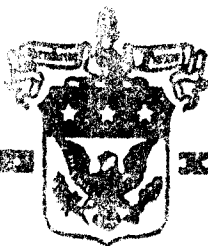
by

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RESTRUCTURING SUPERPOWERS: THE ROLE OF THE MILITARY

AN INDIVIDUAL STUDY PROJECT

by

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ABSTRACT

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A critical part of the emerging new world order will in fact be the political, social, and economic structures and viabilities of the old superpowers: the Soviet Union and the United States. Currently, it appears that the U.S. is perhaps handling its problems of restructuring better than its old Cold War rival. While the Soviets are struggling to maintain some control over and positive relationships with the various parts of their declining empire, the U.S. seems to have gained some increased world prestige from its military successes in the Persian Gulf. The current U.S. well-being--precarious though it may be--owes much to the performance of U.S. armed forces in the recent Gulf War. And this military performance itself offers dramatic evidence of the U.S. armed forces' successful rebuilding following the Vietnam War. I believe that my Russian military counterparts currently face an extraordinary opportunity to restructure the Soviet military in such a way that their restructuring could contribute significantly to their national well-being and to global stability. In this sense, the Soviet military are perhaps the greatest hope for the realization of Gorbachev's dream of a new, reformed Russia.

A critical part of the emerging new world order will in fact be the political, social, and economic structures and viabilities of the old superpowers: the Soviet Union and the United States. Currently, it appears that the U.S. is perhaps handling its problems of restructuring better than its old Cold War rival. While the Soviets are struggling to maintain some control over and positive relationships with the various parts of their declining empire, the U.S. seems to have gained some increased world prestige from its military successes in the Persian Gulf. While the Soviet economy by all accounts seems to have fallen into shambles, the U.S. economy seems to be riding out a perplexing recession as many experts in government and business forecast better days ahead. While the Soviet President Gorbachev seems to be on the brink of political disaster, U.S. President Bush is basking in the glow of unprecedented popularity at home, contemplating a second term in office. The current U.S. well-being--precarious though it may be--owes much to the performance of U.S. armed forces in the recent Gulf War. And this military performance itself offers dramatic evidence of the U.S. armed forces' successful rebuilding following the Vietnam War. No one questions current U.S. military leadership, human performance, or technological superiority. As the Vietnam War took more and more of a toll on U.S. morale, our leaders lamented that our military was nothing more than a mirror reflection of our society.

Some pundits are now contending that our military should provide a model for social restructuring: If the military can perform so well during a time of austerity and downsizing, why can't we perform across the board more efficiently and effectively? If the military can integrate its planning and operations so cooperatively and successfully with its "civilian" components (reserves, DOD civilians and contractors), why can't our society as a whole share responsibility from sector to sector for worthwhile common enterprises? If the military can overcome problems of racism and substance abuse, why can't our larger society itself get a stronger grip on these debilitating social ills?

During a recent visit to the Soviet Union, I became convinced that Soviet military leadership is indeed capable of leading the Soviet military establishment out of its current internal crisis. Perhaps the Soviet military could thereby provide some kind of model for successfully dealing with profound problems, just as the American military of the 1990s has become. Soviet military leaders are well educated, organized, disciplined, powerful, and patriotic; they head up the least corrupt of the Soviet institutions.¹ They have prepared themselves thoroughly, carefully, and thoughtfully for their new role, as we can see in their planning document "Defense Ministry Reform 'Concept'."² Herein they publicly and accurately identify major Soviet problems, both within the military and within society itself. Unlike the KGB and the Communist Party, the Soviet military has the candor and integrity to identify real problems. These other organizations want to lay the blame for Soviet woes on Soviet citizens, whom they want to dismiss as habitual malcontents.³

On the other hand, the Soviet military leaders present a more systemic view of the problem: They comprehend the larger, humanistic issues. They acknowledge that past Soviet treatment of soldiers is no longer acceptable.⁴ Traditionally, Soviet soldiers have been little more than cannon fodder, when doctrine proclaimed that soldiers "can be held in check only through fear" and "disciplined by copious application of the lash."⁵ In many ways, Soviet military leaders are facing problems comparable with those their American military counterparts faced in the 1970s: ethnic/racial problems; disciplinary problems; morale problems, including criminality and drug and alcohol abuse.⁶ Likewise, just as the American military in many ways became the scapegoat for U.S. failure in Vietnam, so also has the once highly esteemed Soviet military fallen from public acclaim in the aftermath of Soviet failure in Afghanistan.⁷ To be sure, the Soviet situation is far more severe and extreme than was the American post-Vietnam situation.

Even so, we may ask whether the Soviet military leadership will follow through with its own internal reforms and thus provide a leading light for the Soviet Union in a time of great political crisis. Will the Soviet army initiate and support democratic reforms? Or will the army renege on these reforms and become an instrument of reaction, helping to push the Soviet people back to the horrors and gulags of Stalinist days?⁸ Unfortunately, this latter prospect seems all too likely. Nonetheless, the Soviet military leadership has the prospect now of providing the civilian leadership with a progressive example of how to create a more fair, more cohesive, more viable system. This essay will pursue this infinitely more desirable, though perhaps much less likely, prospect. It will show how, in the Soviet context, the USSR military might play a role comparable to its American counterparts--how it could provide a positive model for restructuring.

Chairman Mao advised that a soldier "must study the relationship between the whole and the part." Thus, he explained how the tactical action (a part of the whole) should relate to and support a larger strategic plan (the whole). So also are Soviet military reforms a tactical part of the much larger political, social, and economic strategy of Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev. So also could the Soviet military's tactical success in carrying out its share of their leader's reforms pave the way for larger strategic success. Gorbachev's reforms are indeed revolutionary--designed to restructure a Communist system that has been in place for some seventy years.⁹ Without doubt, these reforms have been designed to impact profoundly on the role, doctrine, mission, budget, and organization of the Soviet military, with its 4.5 million soldiers.¹⁰ They are impacting as well on the KGB--the civilian guardian of the Soviet system--and on the Communist Party--which may be fairly described as the system itself. Thus, Gorbachev's reforms are systemic and revolutionary. They go to the heart of the Soviet structure, especially to the Soviet military.

Gorbachev's reforms have been designed to redress problems that existed at the outset of the Soviet era, problems that the Soviets have not dealt with successfully, and problems that the Soviet regime has in effect brought upon itself.¹¹ These reforms can be best understood in the context of Soviet history itself. Russia was surely slow to enter the modern era, and she kept herself mostly isolated from the Western progress of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Tzar Nicholas II managed to bring Russia's industry to within two or three decades of U.S. progress by the outset of World War I.¹² He accomplished this despite the absolutism of the crown, despite an archaic governmental system, and despite the lack of a parliamentary system. His empire consisted of a loose consortium of multinational and multicultural peoples, all of them more or less susceptible to the rigors of a powerful secret police. His single most powerful instrument of modernization was the program of "Stolypin land reform," implemented after the 1905 revolution to establish stability and repress disorder. It provided for universal literacy and modernization of agriculture. Politically, it attempted to establish a conservative, pro-government peasantry by setting up agricultural reforms that encouraged private land ownership.¹³

These efforts at reform ignited serious opposition. Some radical factions called for immediate and total destruction of tsarist power. The two major revolutionary parties (the Socialist Revolutionary Party and the Social Democrats--later the Communist Party) opposed the radical conservatives from the left. Neither party wanted the reforms to succeed.¹⁴ These conservative-liberal tensions persist today, when recently we have observed the conservative subversion of Gorbachev's reform efforts, forcing him to submit to reactionary pressures to maintain his tenuous hold on the reins of Soviet power.¹⁵

Early in this century, Russia's participation in two wars profoundly influenced the

course of Russian history: the 1905 war with Japan and World War I. The impacts of these wars led to the collapse of tsarist government and paved the way for Lenin's Bolshevik takeover of the country.¹⁶ In many ways, Russia today faces the same problems she faced in 1917 when Lenin came to power. Soviet military leaders today should recall two tragic circumstances that took place in the aftermath of the Bolshevik takeover: First, Lenin sought to eliminate the country's intellectual and cultural community (the "bourgeois").¹⁷ Second, in 1929 Stalin consolidated his power in part by undermining agricultural progress gained through the Stolypin reforms. He denied the kulaks--the most competent and successful peasants--their hard-earned rights of private ownership by "ruthless confiscation of what little property most of its members possessed, by deportation of a high proportion of those and other peasant families, and by the punishment--in many cases the execution--of those who resisted."¹⁸ Following this, Russia endured major famines; two-thirds of the nation's livestock disappeared. Russian agriculture to this day has not recovered from Stalin's brutal policies. Those who survived Lenin's vengeance were now subjected to even harsher reprisals. In fact, these arbitrary, indiscriminate, and unpredictable reprisals grew into a frenzy of millions of innocent and frightened people denouncing one another simply to save themselves and to prove their own "loyalty" to a terrorist regime. Friend turned against friend, neighbor against neighbor, brother against brother, child against parent. Several million Russians suffered and died in labor camps; other millions were systematically executed.¹⁹ Thus, Soviet society remains fearful, uncertain, essentially hopeless and insecure--not a people who can believe readily in reform and progress.

Soviet industrialization has as well proven reckless, ruthless, and inhumane. Starting with the first Five year Plan (1928-1933), Soviet industrialization has proved to be ill-planned, hastily implemented, wasteful, brutally insensitive to human concerns, and environmentally abusive. Even now, seventy years later, Soviet industry continues to exhibit these reckless

tendencies.²⁰

Likewise, World War II proved to be catastrophic to the Soviet Union. She entered the war immediately after losing hundreds of thousands of soldiers in a war against Finland. Even so, the Great Patriotic War against a hated Nazi invader raised Soviet nationalistic feelings to unprecedented heights. Yet perhaps 30 million Soviet citizens died in the sweeping destruction that leveled great cities, millions of homes, large industries and railroads, and much of the Soviet infrastructure.²¹

Stalin contributed to this massive brutalization by his treatment of Soviet prisoners of war in Germany, his disregard for Soviet citizens trapped behind German lines, his deportation of entire nationalities suspected of sympathizing with the German invaders, the excesses of Soviet police in occupied areas (such as the Katyn massacre of Polish officers), and the atrocities of Soviet soldiers as they crossed Poland and entered Germany.²² Despite the strong nationalistic support of the war at its outset, the Soviet people exited from the war more weary, hardened, despondent, and sorrowful than they had ever been. They saw no end to their miseries. The victorious Stalin government looked no more promising or reassuring than did Hitler's invasion at the outset of the war.²³

Even so, there seemed some room for hope that the common effort and courageous resistance to the Nazi invasion would pave the way for a better way of life in the Soviet Union. Stalin soon made it clear that there would be no changes: no concessions for the Soviet consumer, no let-up in the ruthless military industrialization, no upgrading of living standards, no relief from police repression of dissent or suspected disloyalty. Even Stalin's death on 5 March 1953 brought with it no immediate prospect of change for the better.²⁴

From 1953 to 1957 the new leader Nikita Khrushchev managed to purge many of Stalin's associates from power. Khrushchev was very much a Communist, but he understood that Stalin's tyrannical oppressiveness posed a danger to the system itself. Thus, his program of de-Stalinization aimed at the "restoration of Leninist norms and collective principle in the work of the Party and state."²⁵ In fact, he sought to modify the system, including some decentralization, such as the "New Course" to address popular dissatisfaction in East Germany. Even so, Khrushchev felt constrained to call Soviet tanks into East Germany and other Soviet bloc nations to maintain Soviet supremacy. He did bring the KGB under his direct control by trying and executing his chief of the secret police.²⁶ Thus during the Khrushchev era considerable evidence emerged regarding the dissatisfaction of Soviet satellite countries, and, despite his use of military force, Khrushchev provided the first indication of a political solution to these problems. Further, he sought to check the excesses of his secret police.

The succeeding Brezhnev era is primarily characterized by carefully concealed economic stagnation.²⁷ Brezhnev committed most Soviet resources and most of the economy to maintaining and increasing a military establishment that--almost alone among all other possible assets--justified designation of the Soviets as a superpower on some kind of parity with the U.S. Brezhnev's government concealed the one-dimensionality and stagnation of its economy mostly by failing to maintain reliable economic statistics.²⁸ Likewise, all levels of the Soviet bureaucracy had been virtually paralyzed by the long, painful history of persecutions of officials who in any way dissented from the official view of things. Russian peasants as well developed their own self-defenses and subterfuges to ward off onerous collectivization of farming. For example, they slaughtered massive numbers of cattle, fled from farms to the city or to construction sites, and developed other stratagems to beat the system. Many citizens discovered ways of avoiding the tasks assigned them by the Soviet system, of doing things their own way, of finding loopholes in the system, and of helping themselves through networks of

friends, family, and acquaintances. Under the Soviet system, bribery and adventurism flourished.²⁹

By the time Gorbachev assumed leadership of the system in 1985, admission of systemic failure seemed unavoidable: The war in Afghanistan had ground down both military and homefront morale; the cost of the arms race had nearly bankrupt the one-dimensional Soviet economy; the emergence of a global society, enhanced by worldwide communications and heavy cultural exchange and tourist traffic, had made all too many Soviet citizens painfully aware of their lack of modern amenities and consumer products, to say nothing of their lack of personal and political freedoms; and, the increasing pressures of non-Russian, unwilling members of the Soviet Union were straining the complex and fragile bonds of the Union. As General Secretary of the Communist Party, Gorbachev found himself in a position as volatile and precarious as the one Khrushchev inherited from Stalin almost forty years earlier.³⁰ His position has been aptly described through two statements that were immediately and popularly applied to his new regime: "If you don't know where you are going, any road will get you there,"³¹ and a professor's remark that "Mikhail Gorbachev is like a person on a tiger and does not know how to get off."³² Gorbachev surely knew that his nation desperately needed "new directions": but which way to go? And he further recognized the urgency of the situation--that he would have to ride it out to somewhere, and that the ride would indeed prove perilous.

Thus Gorbachev called for "a revolution without bullets."³³ In fact, we now know that he sought to initiate and sustain his bulletless revolution on two well-known concepts: "glasnost" (openness) and "perestroika" (restructuring).³⁴ By openly addressing the profound problems of his society, he sought to mobilize the Soviet masses in support of reforms of the Communist Party--reforms that would improve the Party's effectiveness in meeting the needs of the state. Indeed, his initiatives have created crisis, considerable chaos, and changes on an

unprecedented scale. Soviet influence and presence in Eastern Europe have collapsed. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is currently threatened with dissolution. The new openness has served to disarm the propagandistic weapon of disinformation. Lies will no longer suffice to sustain at least the semblance of social and political stability. Replacing the old myth of the dedicated Soviet socialist laborer is the new reality of a workforce overcome by "apathy, indifference, theft and lack of respect for honest work."³⁵ Ordinary Soviet citizens no longer bother to mask their contempt for the Soviet system. We have already noted that a Soviet army planning document fully and cogently addresses the problems of the Soviet society.³⁶

But how far will this new, unprecedented openness go toward effecting genuine reforms and thereby producing genuine revolution? Surely the Soviets stand a very good chance of becoming victims of the history they have helped so much to create. For example, the lack of reliable economic statistics surely will make economic reform that much more difficult.³⁷ The longstanding Soviet repression of dissent and political opposition has stifled creativity and innovation, so vital to effective change. The practice of state-sponsored and state-run industry is entirely antithetical to the entrepreneurial, capitalistic genius that has inspired the emergence of the new global economic superpowers, West Germany and Japan. The tradition of dedicating all research and development and most production to armaments does not lend itself easily to conversion to consumer and contemporary high-tech design and manufacturing.³⁸ Decades of neglect and abuse of the environment provide little prelude for an emerging global era of Greenpeace and friendliness toward Mother Earth.³⁹

However, the Soviet military establishment has sufficient leadership, organization, dedication, and integrity to provide a model for reform.⁴⁰ We have already noted their willingness to confront, identify, and elaborate on the problems. In the Defense Ministry Draft Reform Plan (November 1990), Soviet Ministry of Defense Yazov sets forth military initiatives

in support of Gorbachev's reform strategy.⁴¹ The Soviet military will reduce both its manpower and weaponry to become more efficient and less a burden to the state. This 10-year plan proceeds from a sound rationale, in solid support of the kinds of change Gorbachev has been seeking. General Mikhail Moiseyev, Chief of Staff of the Soviet armed forces, has observed that "Today, we have no apprehensions, nor do we suspect any nation of planning a war against the Soviet Union. This has allowed the Soviet leadership to adopt a new military-political doctrine of reasonable sufficiency . . . restructuring will make the armed forces less of a burden to the state and more efficient at the same time . . . and would reduce it to the corresponding level of real military danger and with the new political, economic and social environment."⁴² The first phase of the plan, already well underway, calls for withdrawal of Soviet forces from Czechoslovakia, Germany, Hungary, Poland and Mongolia by 1994. This withdrawal responds, in part, to ongoing arms control agreements. Further, civil defense and military construction units will be eliminated from the Soviet force structure.⁴³

During the second phase of the plan, Soviet forces will be regrouped within the Soviet Union itself. This reorganization will include a new central command structure and a realignment of military districts. These changes should be effected in 1994 and 1995.⁴⁴

The plan's third and final phase calls for a 50 percent reduction in Soviet strategic offensive armaments by the year 2000. During this drawdown, recombining units with similar tasks and weapons will enhance Soviet military efficiency. The armed forces themselves will draw down from 4 million to about 3.2 million armed personnel: 1,300 generals, 22,000 officers, and 250,000 noncommissioned officers will be cut from the force. Nonetheless, the Soviet draft will continue, with alternative service available to those who object to military service on grounds of religious conscientious objection.⁴⁵ Indeed these plans for a reduced force are already being initiated: a 400,000 person draft shortfall, in addition to 10,000 Soviet

armed forces desertions, contributed to a significant reduction of forces in 1990.⁴⁶ Further, 63 percent of the armed forces are conscripts, called in twice yearly for 2 years of compulsory active service. The resulting 25 percent annual turnover, compounded by unprecedented draft-dodging, certainly enhances the feasibility for drawdown. In the longer run, such a drawdown will serve to diminish the Soviet's huge pool of military reserves, which will be fed less and less by the reduced flow of trained, returning active soldiers.⁴⁷

But Soviet military reforms have met with some of the same kind of resistance that Gorbachev's broader economic, political, and social reforms have met with. Some unanticipated chaos has arisen among the military. Unit commanders have been unable to end, overnight, the tradition of hazing and harassment of recruits. Heightened awareness of these problems, along with official pronouncements against such practices, has led to increased desertion rates. Further, offended troops now seem more likely to retaliate, so violence, to the point of bloody assaults, is increasing. Likewise, the demoralized Soviet army is experiencing an alarming rate of suicide. Crime rates in the army increased 40 percent during a recent 8-month period. Several Soviet republics noted as much as a 60 percent increase in desertions in 1990. The new Gorbachev focus on economic prosperity and improved standards of living has detracted significantly from the traditional prestige and privilege of service in the Soviet military.⁴⁸

Predictably, younger Soviet officers have been more receptive and responsive to change. Their older counterparts have been more resistant to reform, so the Soviet officer corps has split somewhat along generational lines. The younger officers are receptive to the possibilities of a trimmer, better paid volunteer army, which would be afforded decent living conditions and the pride of serving a true Motherland, rather than serving a more disparate, abstract republic. Soviet generals are obviously reluctant to surrender current privileges and

the advantages status quo provides. Despite this schism, the Soviet military establishment remains essentially loyal, subservient to larger political processes, of which its own welfare and future remain an indeterminate part:

Although armed and restless about the country's rapid deterioration, the army--or at least most of the officer corps--appears to have little appetite for a coup d'etat and the consequent responsibility for solving the nation's crushing problems.⁴⁹

It thus appears that, given the decline of the Communist Party and the volatility of Gorbachev's efforts at reform, the Soviet military is looking for someone to follow.⁵⁰

* * *

The Soviet military is no longer the Cold War force of infinite menace and impenetrable mystery. Rather, it is a force beset by ethnic schisms, lack of discipline, generational conflict, and plummeting morale.⁵¹ It currently exhibits some of the characteristics of the U.S. Army in the early 1970s, when the Vietnam War was grinding down. However, leaders of the U.S. military forces seem (at least in retrospect) to have taken a more proactive approach to restructuring their force than their Soviet counterparts seem to be exhibiting. The U.S. military's recent performances in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm confirm the success of U.S. leaders in transforming a broken force of the 1970s to an Army of Excellence in the 1990s. This complex transformation proceeded from undivided attention to the most important military resource: soldiers. To rebuild, the U.S. Army focused first on selection of leaders with character; then the Army trained and developed these leaders, carefully instilling winning attitudes in them.⁵² This new core of Army leaders then assumed responsibility for selecting, training, retaining, and leading the current Army of Excellence, which has been nurtured and developed by six core values called the Army imperatives:

1. **Maintain a quality force:** Select and retain soldiers who are educated, motivated and ambitious.

2. Maintain dynamic, realistic doctrine to guide our actions on the battlefield.
3. Maintain a force mix that meets the needs of national security.
4. Conduct tough, realistic training as the cornerstone of readiness and the basis for credible deterrence and capable defense.
5. Modernize to improve our warfighting capability in response to the modernization of our potential adversaries.
6. Develop competent, confident leaders.⁵³

New leadership concepts were not developed overnight. They developed from the weak Army personnel structure created by the military buildup in support of the Vietnam War and the turbulent times following the war. These concepts emerged from the fires of adversity: post-Vietnam downsizing, painful reflection on lessons learned from the war, refocusing the mission from Southeast Asia to Europe, transitioning from a draft-supported Army to a new all-volunteer Army. But the Army did not choose to focus simply on short-term problems of leadership; rather, it sought conscientiously to produce new leaders with vision, character, and moral courage.⁵⁴ In fact, Army planners took a valuable slogan to heart: "People are our most important resource."⁵⁵ Once this was recognized as a fundamental concept, the Army worked systematically to increase salaries, benefits, and training programs to enhance human resources: "The most important element of this strategy is developing leaders who can direct the Army."⁵⁶ In turn, this leadership development led immediately to improved race relations and organizational effectiveness--all of it designed to increase human productivity and organization cohesiveness.

Soviet military leadership currently faces similar problems. On the other hand, they have a far greater opportunity to serve their nation than their American counterparts of the

1970s had--for the Soviet stakes appear to be far higher than were the American stakes back then. They too must effectively downsize their force. They too must operate with severe fiscal restraints--just as the U.S. military faced during the Carter era and may again face in the future. They too must seek to develop human resources to their maximum among an ethnically and racially diverse force.

We are now well aware of how well the Japanese have heeded American managerial concepts to build themselves into a nation of corporate giants. Ironically, U.S. corporations and institutions are seeking to really learn the lessons that Japan learned from us. Just as the Japanese have learned certain things from us, so could the Soviets beneficially turn to current American managerial theory and philosophy for advice on how to restructure their armed forces, so that this restructuring may serve as a positive model for the entire society. Certainly, U.S. military leaders of the 1970s paid attention to this theory, adapting and implementing as appropriately as they could to their own restructuring concerns. The U.S. Army learned how to use greater flexibility in using people, how to overcome resistance to technological change, how to construct a more supportive organizational climate, and how to realize huge institutional savings from lower absenteeism, reduced personnel turnover, and improved employee mental and physical health.

These lessons were learned through the Army's increased focus on personnel and leadership. Army leaders learned to create a working climate of trust and confidence; they insisted on integrity in all working relationships and thereby fostered efficient and effective long-term implementation of new doctrine and emergent strategy. Following the model of successful corporations, the Army sought to put "the right person in the right job."⁵⁷ The Army sought to nurture, develop, and challenge loyalty. Army leaders were selected and trained to lead by example--to demonstrate at all times interest in and concern for soldiers.⁵⁸ Leader attitudes,

values, philosophies, and goals came under constant scrutiny; such intangibles became part of the leader's overall accountability. Organizations sought to put effective feedback mechanisms in place, so leaders could then see how well they were communicating these abstractions to their soldiers. The Army has paid close attention to evolving leadership theory and practice.

Most of all, following the dictates of Peters and Waterman, the Army has sought to overcome institutional resistance to change. In the past, large organizations paid little more than "lip service" to change through issuance of policy statements, bland announcements of "new" strategies, pronouncements regarding planning, and promulgation of graphics depicting "new" budgetary priorities or organizational restructuring. In the 1970s, a new imperative emerged: "We fiddle with the strategy or we change the structure." Thus, the Army acknowledged the need for a new, different kind of change. Through restructuring, truly new strategy and doctrine was created. In turn, this new strategy and doctrine led to refinements in the new, emergent restructuring. The Army again paid close attention to the Peters-Waterman itemization of those characteristics of excellent organizations:

- They have a bias for action; they get things done.
- They remain close to the customer; they constantly seek external feedback.
- They welcome autonomy; they seek entrepreneurship and foster many leaders.
- They seek productivity through people; they maximize personnel performance through respect for each individual in the organization.
- They are value-driven through hands-on leadership.
- The organization's philosophy and values are most responsible for organizational achievements.
- They are both loose and tight: They centralize what should be centralized and decentralize what should be decentralized.

--They center on a basic organizational philosophy and values; they decentralized on decisionmaking, feedback, and employee input into organizational concerns.

They greatly value employee autonomy.⁵⁹

During the past two decades, the U.S. Army has sought to adapt these characteristics into its restructuring, its operations, and especially into its personnel policies. During my recent trip to the USSR, a professor there indicated how much the Soviet people respected U.S. military operations in the Gulf War on the basis of its restraint: amazingly few friendly casualties, persistent attempts to reduce enemy casualties and to restrict them to the enemy's armed forces, and the decision to cease military actions in accord with a strictly limited political objective. As I listened to this praise, I could not help but recall that our new leadership development program began with a concern for people. Now, two decades later, I welcomed this praise because the praise was based on the same premise: we had proceeded with a concern for people.

The U.S. Army remains attentive to the dictates of such managerial philosophers as Tom Peters. We have learned that complacency is the eternal enemy from within. Thus, currently the U.S. Army remains cognizant of Peters' most recent list of characteristics of organizations that seem most likely to thrive in the 1990s:

- They will be flatter, with fewer layers of organization.
- They will have more autonomous units, thus more local authority within them.
- They will be oriented toward differentiation, seeking newness and valuing nonconformity.
- They will be quality-conscious, seeking always to maintain and raise standards of productivity and

performance.

- They will be service-conscious, always seeking clientele-satisfaction.
- They will be more responsive.
- They will innovate rapidly.
- They will seek added value in productivity principally through highly trained, flexible personnel.⁶⁰

As a member of an American minority group, I am sympathetic with the argument that a people's or culture's history can exert a virtually inexorable hold on that people. Thus, I do not for a single moment deny the influence of the terrible struggles and ordeals the Soviet people have faced and in some ways overcome in this century. However, as an American military officer, I take considerable pride in having played my small role in the restructuring of the American military during the past two decades. I have been a witness to and participated in profound institutional change--all for the better. I am fully aware of the perils of being swept away in the euphoria of the superb performance of the U.S. military in the recent Gulf War. I know that the ultimate solutions to that region's problems cannot be military solutions. Yet I again take pride in the fact that my organization's performance there has become a source of pride and renewal for the American people. I am especially proud that our young people have been highlighted in this operation. Finally, I believe that my Soviet military counterparts currently face an extraordinary opportunity to restructure the Soviet military in such a way that their restructuring could contribute significantly to their national well-being and to global stability. Given the other institutions to which Gorbachev may turn, the Soviet military are perhaps the greatest hope for the realization of Gorbachev's dream of a new, reformed Russia.

ENDNOTES

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